

drive its bargain, with you at every turning, and so unscrupulously doth it leave the devil to take the hindmost every morning, noon, and night, that I will cheerfully allow it the discreditable merit of perfect will, if it had the power as circumstances go, to mete out to many others besides our unfortunate craft a measure as miserable as this. But I know of no companion that we have in any way. Close-shaving, nigger-driving, slop-work, and such like, are nothing to this. Fifty sugar-slaves in the field, or fifty slop-workers in the garret, would laugh you to scorn if you were to propose for their acceptance the case of fifty architects in a competition,—every one of the fifty to do his day's work for the chance of one day's wages for the whole of poor amount, or perhaps no wages at all, and the obtainment of another day's wages for another day's hard work! "Our trade," they would tell you, "has scarcely come to such a pass quite yet." But, after all, I think I may give human foresight sufficient credit to assume that accident is not the sole cause of our standing alone, but that instinctive will would in most cases refuse the simplest approach to such a system as that under which we bow the neck so woefully. Sculptors, for instance, have so far yielded as to model statuettes of Sir Robert Peel in considerable numbers, for the chance of employment to execute a statue,—which statuettes, all save the selected, are therefore worthless, and the time spent upon them wasted; but, suppose such an advertisement as the following to be issued:—

To Sculptors, Stonemasons, Image-men, and others.—Whereas, the guardians of the poor for the Union of Skilligolee propose to set up in some suitable position in the workhouse of the said union, a stone bust of their respected chairman; notice is hereby given, that they will meet at the said workhouse on the 20th proximo, to receive designs for such bust: the designs to be in plaster the size of life, and to represent faithfully the physiognomy of the said chairman; and particular attention to be devoted to the folds of his chin and the bumps of his crown; each design to be distinguished by a motto, and to be accompanied with an estimate of the cost, which must not exceed 10*l.*; the decision to rest with the guardians aforesaid: and the author of the successful design to receive the premium of 20*s.* and to be employed to carve the bust at a fair price; but none of the authors of unsuccessful designs to have any claim upon the said guardians in respect thereof. By order, **SUCH-A-ONE, Clerk.**

How many careful busts of their chairman would the guardians receive in reply to this, to be all but one returned in utter worthlessness to their authors? Very few, I dare say. And I affirm, that the true case with architects is only tenfold worse in degree and rather more than less contemptible in kind.

If I were to enter into calculations which are not at all complicated, these results are soon too clearly shown. First, that architects spend, in money out of pocket alone, in every competition, on an average 200*l.* for the obtainment of 100*l.* which after all has to be worked hard for, and under circumstances (as I testify from experience) fundamentally disadvantageous. Secondly, that they add to this very bad investment, an amount of time which, at moderate calculation, might produce in the extension of the employment of the profession and such like ordinary exertion in business, 200*l.* more at least. Thirdly, that an architect will pay for, say, one-twentieth chance (at the most) of 100*l.* to be worked for, not 2*l.* which may be about the value of the chance, but 5*l.* on an average, at the least, in money, and 5*l.* more in value of time (as above reckoned). Fourthly, that the profession at large appear to spend in utter waste and mere conceited hope and pernicious excitement, at least, 5,000*l.* per annum, as I reckon, in money out of pocket (besides time), without one farthing's worth of benefit to the body. And I will further say, that in almost every case the hope of making friends is found by the successful competitor to be an utter fallacy; and that the hope of acquiring credit as a matter of business is almost always blighted by one or another of the treacherous results of so bad a system; in short, that a competition work generally ends in being considered "an unfortunate affair" both for the sake of the em-

ployer and for the sake of the architect,—a result quite in accordance with theory. It is surely much better that young men should begin at the beginning, and work their way legitimately into business; and that the elder and eminent practitioners should reap the legitimate fruits of the perseverance and exertion of a life, and secure by their experience for superior works the assurance of enduring merit; than that every prize that comes up should be thrown out for unscrupulous trickery and, at the best, superficial attractiveness to win, to the deprivation of the old and eminent of their fair due and the distraction of young minds, the waste of young money, and the destruction of young health, by a specious, treacherous, profitless fallacy—an *ignis fatuus* of the log.

Unfortunately there is, besides the dearly beloved principle of lottery, an element of personal vanity mixed up in the operation of this system, which renders it extremely difficult to assail it, even by the trades-union principle itself, generally so potent in such cases. But something must be attempted, or much harm may be done before time, the universal restorer of equilibrium, restores it here. I am not opposed to the abstract principle of competition; I believe there are important virtues in the principle; but the present system of its operation throws the advantage all on one side, and gives only invidious mischief to the other: the elements of good, to be again led forth (for they once showed their faces somewhat kindly, but have now hid themselves away), demand a radical organic reform, a re-adjustment of system from the basis of it. Nothing less will do; and I believe no other than positive, active (and no longer passive) resistance will do it.

I am not prepared at present to propose a scheme of change; but I have a project, I confess, which I will think over. Matters can scarcely be worse than they now are, so we may look for a mending before long,—a purpose for which it would be well that the profession should gather itself at once into a vigorous executive, even if this were not eminently desirable on other important questions of the theory of making a living. But I must not enter upon this.

My son, I have now done. I have traced for you the range of your high landmarks, one by one impartially, and with such emphasis and attempt at comprehensiveness as the limits of such a manner of disquisition as this would allow. I love the architect's work; and I would have you love it; I have studied it, and I would have you study it all your life long. For it is true that "being founded upon and adorned with so many different sciences, those who have not from youth gradually climbed up to the summit cannot, without presumption, call themselves master of it." Art, Delineation, Science, Building, Business,—these are the five orders of your study. If my dissertation has only reached so far as to constitute, in some degree, a discrimination and hasty exposition of this,—I have attempted no more, and such can never be worthless. Keep your eye steadily on the dial of theory, and your practice will be well guided,—you will be spared many a profitless day, and many an anxious night. Farewell.

ROBERT KERR.

LADY SCULPTORS.—With reference to your notice of Miss Harriet Hosmer as the American female sculptor, you are quite right when you hint that she is not the first of her class. You speak of the Princess of Orleans being overlooked, and if you will take the trouble of referring to Allan Cunningham's "Lives of the British Sculptors," you will find an account of Miss Conway, afterwards Mrs. Damer, a lady of high accomplishments and a great enthusiast in the noble art of sculpture. Nelson sat for his bust to her, and the Emperor Napoleon promised her that honour. She was one of the three accomplished and high born ladies who canvassed in Westminster for the great Fox, the Duchess of Devonshire being another.—R. H. D.

## ARE THE ROYAL TOMBS IN WESTMINSTER ABBEY TO BE RESTORED?

THE gathering of architects and antiquaries on Monday last, for the inspection of these venerable remains, in accordance with the arrangement made at the last meeting of the Institute, was gratifying, and may be a memorable event. At twelve o'clock nearly 150 gentlemen assembled in Poets' Corner, and (the usual fee being, through the courtesy of the dean and chapter, dispensed with) they proceeded, under the guidance of Mr. Scott and Mr. Donaldson, to examine the remains which had led to the discussion already reported in our columns. We shall not attempt to notice all the many points of interest which attracted the attention of the visitors. The mosaic altar pavement was first inspected: the monument of King Selert (with its curious paintings), that of Edmund Crouchback, so elaborate in its decorations, and others before the altar, were duly admired. Proceeding to the Confessor's chapel, the shrine of the saint was the grand object of attraction; and as its history was explained, and its original design and successive alterations in part elucidated, many were the speculations indulged in by the company upon the latter points. After the pavement of this chapel, the attention of the assembly was directed to the tomb of Henry III. The perfection of the mosaic decorations of this monument, in such parts as have not been subjected to wanton injury, excited general admiration. The decidedly English character of the effigy, and other metal work, was pointed out as distinguished from the lower portion. Each of the royal tombs was successively examined; and their dilapidated state excited general sympathy. Mr. Donaldson zealously urged the advantage of restoration; but it may at least be said that the feeling of the meeting was, on that point, far from unanimous: all agreed, however, that something should be done. The visitors were greatly interested by the inspection of the finest remaining fragment of mosaic, on the floor of this chapel, under the step of Henry the Fifth's monument; said to be in memory of one of the family of De Valence; and subsequently by similar mosaic work, in the south ambulatory, to the memory of the children and grandchildren of Henry III. The coronation chair, and the relics of Cressy, Poitiers, and Agincourt, were duly honoured; as were also the curious tomb and chantry chapel of Henry V. The headless wooden effigy of this monarch was aptly illustrated by Mr. Donaldson, in connection with the monument of Wm. De Valence, in one of the side chapels, showing the manner in which such wooden figures were coated with metal plates. Those on the figure of Henry V. are believed to have been of silver. Admitted within the screen surrounding the tomb of Henry VII. and his Queen, in the chapel bearing his name, the visitors unanimously acknowledged the artistic feeling of its great sculptor, Torregiano. Here the examination of the Royal Tombs concluded; but those who remained enjoyed a treat in the opportunity afforded them of visiting many other parts of the venerable fabric. First among these was the crypt beneath the chapter-house; next the cloisters; and a fine column and other remains of the Confessor's work, in an apartment near the entrance to the chapter-house. In examining the remains of the refectory, a discovery was made of a Norman wall, unknown even to the architect, forming its southern side. Thence the party proceeded to a remarkable chapel, opening from the south transept, partly filled with fragments of ancient iron-work from the royal tombs, and containing at the altar end a singularly perfect and curious wall-painting. The zealous investigators went into the noble triforium, and subsequently to the interior and exterior of the roof, and it was half-past five o'clock before they separated.

MAY I venture to offer a slight correction, or rather perhaps an explanation, of the few remarks I made at the last meeting of the Institute of British Architects, on the question of the Restoration or Non-restoration of the